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New York

President: Mr. Al-Nasser ..... (Qatar)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. John Evans Atta Mills, President of the Republic of Ghana

The President: It is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. John Evans Atta Mills, the late President of the Republic of Ghana, who passed away on 24 July.

It is with deep sadness that we bid farewell to His Excellency Mr. John Evans Atta Mills. On behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations, I extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife and bereaved family, and to the Government and people of Ghana.

Before this difficult time of grief and mourning, Mr. Mills had a most distinguished career as a professor of law. He was an admirable public servant and a great sports enthusiast. As President of Ghana, he was widely regarded as a caring, principled and dedicated leader who made lasting contributions to the advancement of economic development and good governance. Millions of Ghanaians will remember him as a man of peace who was truly dedicated to democracy and who worked hard for the unity and stability of his country. Thanks to his leadership, Ghana remains today a model of democracy in the region. Mr. Mills's legacy of hard work, integrity and sacrifice will remain bright and enduring for the people of Ghana and of the world.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. John Evans Atta Mills.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Botswana, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana): I have the honour and privilege to deliver this fitting tribute on behalf of the Group of African States in New York.

It was with a profound sense of shock and grief that the whole of Africa received the sad and heartbreaking news three days ago about the demise of the President of the Republic of Ghana, Mr. John Evans Atta Mills. In Mr. Mills, Africa has lost one of its shining stars. As we look up to the skies and pray to the Almighty, it is just too difficult to contend with the reality of that irreplaceable loss.

Mr. John Evans Atta Mills was indeed a distinguished son of Africa who had an unwavering commitment to the improvement of the quality of life and welfare of his people. Throughout his political career, Mr. Mills fought for the social and economic empowerment of the average Ghanaian. In that process, he specifically targeted the less privileged and made a conscious effort to reach out to them. Indeed, the African continent has lost one of its illustrious sons, a distinguished statesman, a patriot par excellence, an agent of change, and above all, an embodiment of integrity and humility.

Since assuming power in 2008, President Mills devoted his energy and attention to the transformation

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of Ghana and to promoting Ghana's competitive edge in the global market. Mr. Mills was also a man of immense intellect who was highly admired and respected throughout the African continent. In the legal profession, Mr. Mills rose through the ranks to become an accomplished academic and mentor, and also a passionate scholar on taxation. He authored quite a number of publications on the subject of taxation, which were sources of reference throughout and outside of Ghana. He served as Commissioner of Ghana's Internal Revenue Service.

The Professor, as he was popularly known in his native country, firmly believed in the sanctity of human dignity. He was a person who got along and always enjoyed sharing his knowledge and experience with people around him. He also had an extraordinary temperament. Mr. Mills was the kind of person who rarely showed emotion, even under the most trying circumstances.

The best way that Africa and the international community as a whole can continue to honour Mr. Mills's memory and legacy is to renew their commitment to upholding human dignity, democracy and accountable governance, freedom and justice, all of which he greatly cherished during his lifetime.

On this solemn occasion, we convey our deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of the Republic of Ghana, and to the family of the late President. May almighty God keep his soul in eternal peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States.

Mrs. Mesquita Borges (Timor-Leste): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Asia and Pacific small island developing States as we pay tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. John Evans Atta Mills, President of Ghana. On behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States, I should like to extend our deep and heartfelt condolences and express our full sympathy and solidarity with the people and Government of Ghana. The Asia-Pacific Group would also like to offer its sorrowful condolences to the President's family.

History will remember the late President for his dedication and long-standing service to his country and people. From his role as a law professor to his work as Vice-President and then President, he was instrumental during a pivotal period in the history of Ghana and the region. President Mills worked tirelessly to improve the lives of the people of Ghana. His efforts bore fruit in the economic growth that Ghana has seen and in the progress it has made in building on and consolidating its democracy. Under his stewardship, Ghana has been hailed as a model of democracy and stability. His vision for the future has seen results accrue from policies focused on investing in local people to ensure that they not only reap the benefits of economic growth, but are also competitive nationally and internationally.

The untimely demise of President Mills, whose qualities and characteristics were too numerous to list here, is felt not only in the hearts of Ghanaians but across the world, where he will be remembered with affection.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Vukobratović (Bosnia and Herzegovina): In my capacity as Chair of the Group of Eastern European States, I would like to express our most sincere condolences to the Government and people of the Republic of Ghana for the loss of President John Atta Mills. Our deepest sympathy also goes to the late President's family.

President Mills was an outstanding political figure on the African continent. He will be remembered for his leadership and dedicated service to his country on its path to democratic and economic success. His efforts to improve the quality of life and human rights of his people have been widely recognized. Under President Mills, Ghana made notable progress in various areas of economic development in the midst of a global economic crisis. His dedicated work and tireless efforts to strengthen democracy and good governance, as well as the significant contribution he made to promoting regional peace, have been praised by the international community. We hope that the legacy of President Mills will serve as an outstanding example in future efforts to lead his country towards progress and prosperity.

We would like to ask the delegation of Ghana to convey to the Government and people of Ghana and the family of the late President Mills our sentiments of solidarity and compassion.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Haiti, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Cazeau (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to pay tribute to the memory of a great visionary and statesman.

On 24 July, a baobab tree fell too soon, at the age of 68, in a hospital in Accra, Ghana. The news of his demise was quickly heard around the world. Here in New York, we meet today to pay tribute to him — not a final tribute, as has been said, but rather in celebration of his life, which was full and dedicated to the advancement of his country, his people, his great continent and of all humankind.

I speak, of course, of President John Atta Mills, who has gone ahead of us to the afterlife, three days after his birthday. He was born on 21 July 1944 in Tarkwa, in the west of the Gold Coast, which became Ghana after independence was declared on 6 March 1957.

A graduate of the economic and political science faculty of the University of London, a holder of a doctorate in law from the University of London's School of African and Oriental Studies, and a Fulbright scholar at Stanford University Law School, President Mills devoted more than a quarter of a century of his life on Earth to training the young people of his country. He was also a visiting professor at Temple University Law School in Philadelphia and at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

President Mills, whose rare integrity was constantly tested, in addition to his numerous intellectual activities, become involved in public life and served his nation at various levels and in various sectors until he was elected to the State's highest public office in 2009.

The President of Haiti, Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly, paying homage to President Mills upon his demise, said that President Mills, whose life will forever be associated with a glorious chapter in Ghanaian history, embodied in his own way the honour of our time. There is no doubt that his memory leaves Ghana a great legacy. Indeed, Ghana remains an example of political stability and democracy that makes it an international lodestar. Its robust economic and social health, development and growth, which never cease to amaze, have made it a showcase for West Africa and must be credited to great visionaries of the calibre of President Mills.

To the successor to this great man — whom I compare yet again to a great baobab tree — I would like once more to offer the sympathies of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. We are certain that, under the leadership of the new President, His Excellency Mr. John Dramani Mahama, President Mills's great projects and programmes will pursue their forward march towards Ghana's lasting development, to the benefit of the whole of Africa. To his bereaved family, the people of Ghana, his immediate colleagues, friends and allies, his alma mater, we recall that this great man, loving husband, good and caring father, sincere friend and ally fought the good fight — a fight that griots will long sing of unchallenged in the galleries and public places and under baobab trees. Let us follow in his footsteps, seek his shade and keep alive his dreams for the future of a better world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Berger (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Group of Western European and other States. I wish to convey to the people and Government of the Republic of Ghana our deepest condolences for the loss of their Head of State, His Excellency John Evans Atta Mills. With the death of President Mills, we mourn the passing of a great statesman, who led Ghana in times of prosperity and made his nation an anchor of stability. In Ghana, we have witnessed the stable development of a democratic State.

Under the wise leadership of John Atta Mills, Ghana has been a reliable partner for the United Nations, with a balanced and prudent engagement in the fragile region of West Africa. President Mills's passing will leave a huge emptiness in the hearts of the Ghanaian people and his followers. We are convinced, however, that Ghanaian democracy will overcome this loss and that the elections in Ghana planned for December of this year will again show the world the mature state of Ghanaian political culture. We wish President Mahama wisdom and courage to lead Ghana towards the elections while promoting, in his tenure, the prosperity of the great Ghanaian nation.

The members of the Group of Western European and other States wish to voice our appreciation and gratitude for the contribution President Mills made not just to his country, but also to the African region and the entire international community. President Mills worked tirelessly for the well-being of the Ghanaian people. Our thoughts and sympathies are with the loved

ones of President Mills, his family and the whole nation at this difficult time.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): On behalf of the host country and the American people, I express our deepest sympathies on the passing of President John Evans Atta Mills of Ghana.

President Mills led Ghana through a period of remarkable growth and development. As President Obama said in his message of condolence,

> "President Mills tirelessly worked to improve the lives of the Ghanaian people. He helped promote economic growth in Ghana in the midst of challenging global circumstances and strengthened Ghana's strong tradition of democracy."

President Mills promoted regional peace and reinforced Ghana's reputation as a leader in Africa. Prior to leading his country, President Mills served with distinction as a Fulbright scholar in the United States and, during his tenure as President, he forged a deeper partnership between Ghana and the United States. Only a few months ago President Obama hosted President Mills in the Oval Office. His passing is a tremendous loss for all of us in the international community. Today our thoughts and prayers are with his family and with all the people of Ghana.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Kanda (Ghana): I address the Assembly this morning with deep sorrow and a very heavy heart. Ghana has lost an illustrious and indefatigable son, His Excellency Mr. John Evans Atta Mills.

He was taken ill suddenly around noon on Tuesday, 24 July, and was rushed to the military medical facility in the capital city. Unfortunately, he passed away around 2.15 p.m., barely one and a half hours after he was taken ill. That day will go down in the history of Ghana as one of its saddest days.

President Mills was in all respects honourable, honest and, above all, extremely humble. He was respectful and respected. He led a surprisingly simple life for a man in his position. He had deep respect for the Office and the people he served. He was a leader par excellence.

He assumed leadership in Ghana during a period in which Ghana needed peace and, above all, tolerance. He was astute in that role and steered the affairs of Ghana to the admiration of all.

President Mills was a scholar, a brilliant professor, an avid sportsman and a distinguished teacher. I had the singular opportunity and honour to serve him as his Chief of Protocol both when he was Vice-President and subsequently when he became President of the Republic of Ghana. I developed a personal relationship with him. He was a fine gentleman. He taught us the glorious virtues of humility and simplicity. He would always say to us, "Do sincere and honest work and you will invariably be rewarded". His death is a huge and painful loss.

We are well-advised, however, not to emphasize how we die, but how we have lived. His life's legacy can be summed up by the accolade bestowed on him by Ghanaians — *Asomdwehene*. In the Ghanaian Akan language, *asomdwehene* means "king of peace". He preached peaceful coexistence, eschewed divisiveness, and lived and led as a father for all. Therefore, while we mourn him, we should equally celebrate his accomplished life. He will be laid in state on 7 and 8 August in Accra. His funeral and burial will then take place on 9 August.

On behalf of President John Dramani Mahama, the Government and the people of Ghana, I wish to express our sincere thanks and profound appreciation and gratitude to the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for this morning's event and for the kind and warm tributes that have been paid to the memory of the outstanding champion of democracy, the rule of law and peace, Mr. John Evans Atta Mills.

The President: Before we proceed to the next item, I shall now suspend the meeting for a short period in order to await the statement of programme budgetary implications for draft resolution A/66/L.56, to be provided by the Department of Management.

The meeting was suspended at 11 a.m. and resumed at 11.20 a.m.

Agenda item 19 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

Draft resolution A/66/L.56

The President: Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2011, the General

Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 19 to the Second Committee. Members will also recall that, at its 108th plenary meeting, on 16 May 2012, the Assembly decided to consider agenda item 19 directly in plenary meeting, and adopted decision 66/561. And under the same item, the Assembly adopted decision 66/544 (b) at its 109th plenary meeting, on 21 May 2012.

We are about to adopt today a draft resolution (A/66/L.56) that endorses the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), entitled "The future we want". Let me first, on behalf of the membership of the United Nations, reiterate our sincere gratitude to the Gove nment and people of Brazil for hosting the Rio+20 Conference and for their warm hospitality. Brazil spared no effort in providing the support needed to ensure the success of that historic Conference. I would also like to acknowledge the leadership of the Government of Brazil, which helped Memb r States to conclude the outcome document that will chart a new way for sustainable development. I would also like to acknowledge the noble leadership of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, throughout the process.

The meetings in Rio in 1992 and in Johannesburg in 2002 put sustainable development on the map, but Rio+20 has defined a new vision of development for the future that is equitable and inclusive and that takes into account the limits of our planet. We have defined the future that we want. Now what is important is implementation. A number of processes were launched in Rio but, in order for them to be successful, we need development cooperation.

International development cooperation must continue to play a key role in promoting solutions to our global challenges. Development cooperation must become wider and deeper. It must go far beyond development assistance. Technology transfer and capacity-building need to be part of development for it to be effective and sustainable. Commitments should be honoured. I am very happy that my Office and I personally were also able to contribute to the preparatory process, including by organizing a retreat and a high-level dialogue. I am also grateful for the opportunity to be part of this historic conference and to speak at its opening and closing.

I am very pleased to see that the General Assembly will continue to play a central role in sustainable development. Member States have their work cut out for them as they discuss the definition of the sustainable development goal, the establishment of a high-level political forum, the crafting of an effective sustainable development financing strategy, the creation of a facilitation mechanism that promotes development, the transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies, and the adoption of modalities for the third international conference on small island developing States in 2014.

In that regard, I wish the Permanent Representative of Brazil success in her role as facilitator of the establishment of the open working group on sustainable development goals. I am sure that my successor will ably lead all such processes. Thus, by adopting draft resolution A/66/L.56 today, we are opening a new chapter. I am confident that it will be a successful chapter as our Heads of State and Government have committed to a path for a new sustainable future for us all.

Let me conclude with what I said in Rio just a few weeks ago. Rio+20 is not an end but a new beginning and the promise of a better life for us and our children and for future generations.

The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/66/L.56.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

In draft resolution A/66/L.56, the General Assembly would endorse the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", which is annexed to the draft resolution

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) took place from 20 to 22 June 2012, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Conference adopted an outcome document that defined agreements on a common vision for the future, renewed political commitment to sustainable development, key areas related to the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, the institutional framework for sustainable development, including the establishment of a high-level political

forum, a framework for action and follow-up in critical areas, including sustainable development goals, and the adoption of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns and means of implementation.

Under the terms of paragraphs 84, 86, 88, 180, 248, 249, 255, 256, 257, 273 and 283 of the outcome document, the General Assembly would decide to establish a universal intergovernmental high-level political forum, building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and subsequently replacing the Commission. The high-level political forum shall follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and should avoid any overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner;

The Assembly would decide to launch an intergovernmental and open, transparent and inclusive negotiation process, under the General Assembly, to define the high-level forum's format and organizational aspects with the aim of convening the first high-level forum at the beginning of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly. It would also consider the need for promoting intergenerational solidarity for the achievement of sustainable development, taking into account the needs of future generations, including by inviting the Secretary-General to present a report on the issue.

The Assembly would commit to strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. It would reaffirm resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, which established UNEP, and other relevant resolutions that reinforce its mandate, as well as the 1997 Nairobi and 2000 Malmö Ministerial Declarations.

To that regard, the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, would adopt a resolution strengthening and upgrading UNEP in the following manner: establish universal membership in the Governing Council of UNEP, as well as other measures to strengthen its governance and its responsiveness and accountability to Member States; have secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources from the regular budget of the United Nations and voluntary contributions to fulfil its mandate; enhance UNEP's voice and ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system by strengthening UNEP engagement in key United Nations coordination bodies and by empowering UNEP to lead efforts to formulate United Nations system-wide strategies on the environment; promote a strong science-policy interface, building on existing international instruments, assessments, panels and information networks, including the Global Environmental Outlook, as one of the processes aimed at bringing together information and assessment to support informed decision-making; disseminate and share evidence-based environmental information and raise public awareness on critical and emerging environmental issues; provide capacity-building to countries and support and facilitate access to technology; progressively consolidate headquarters functions in Nairobi and strengthen its regional presence in order to assist countries, upon request, in the implementation of their national environmental policies, collaborating closely with other relevant entities of the United Nations system; and ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, drawing on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions and exploring new mechanisms to promote transparency and the effective engagement of civil society.

Building on the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, the Assembly would call for the convening of the third international conference on small island developing States (SIDS) in 2014, recognizing the importance of coordinated, balanced and integrated actions to address the sustainable development challenges facing SIDS, and invite the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session to determine the modalities of the conference.

The General Assembly would resolve to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly. An open working group would be constituted no later than the opening of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly and would comprise 30 representatives, nominated by Member States through the five United Nations regional groups, with the aim of achieving fair, equitable and balanced geographic representation. At the outset, this open working group would decide on

its method of work, including developing modalities, to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society, the scientific community and the United Nations system in its work in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience. It would submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action and coordinate the process, which needs to be coherent with the processes considering the post-2015 development agenda. The initial input to the work of the working group would be provided by the Secretary-General in consultations with national Governments. In order to provide technical support to this process and to the work of the working group, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to ensure all necessary input and support to this work from the United Nations system, including by establishing an inter-agency technical support team and expert panels as needed, drawing on all relevant expert advice. Reports on the progress of work would be made regularly to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly would agree to establish an intergovernmental process under its own auspices, with technical support from the United Nations system, and in open and broad consultations with relevant international and regional financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders. The process would assess financing needs; consider the effectiveness, consistency and synergies of existing instruments and frameworks; and evaluate additional initiatives with a view to preparing a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving sustainable development objectives.

The General Assembly would implement the process of an intergovernmental committee, comprising 30 experts nominated by regional groups, with equitable geographical representation, and concluding its work by 2014. The Assembly would consider this report and take appropriate actions.

The General Assembly would request relevant United Nations agencies to identify options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies by, inter alia, assessing technology needs of developing countries, options to address them and capacity-building. It would request the Secretary-General, on the basis of the options identified and taking into account existing models, to make recommendations regarding the facilitation mechanism to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session.

The General Assembly would welcome the commitments voluntarily entered into at Rio+20 and throughout 2012 by all stakeholders and their networks to implementing concrete policies, plans, programmes, projects and actions to promote sustainable development and poverty eradication. It would invite the Secretary-General to compile those commitments and facilitate access to other registries that have compiled commitments, in an Internet-based registry. The registry should make information about the commitments fully transparent and accessible to the public, and it should be periodically updated.

With regard to the financial implications of the proposals, this statement of programme budget implications identifies the key paragraphs in the outcome document that may potentially lead to additional resource requirements under the regular budget and/or extrabudgetary resources. The recommendations contained in the outcome document would require further study and consultations with all stakeholders in order to determine the modalities on how the decisions contained in the outcome document are to be implemented, following which the Secretary-General would submit to the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, a detailed report on programme budget implications, associated with the implementation of the decisions of the outcome document for the sections concerned, including necessary revisions to the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 and possible implications for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015. In addition, any implications for the biennial programme plan for the period 2012-2013 and the proposed biennial programme for the period 2014-2015 for the relevant programmes will be presented to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fifty-third session, in June 2013, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 58/269.

Paragraph 88 of the outcome document invites the General Assembly to adopt a resolution that would strengthen and facilitate the upgrade of the United Nations Environment Programme. In that regard, the Secretary-General, in line with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, would revert on possible financial implications at a time when the draft

resolution of the General Assembly on the outcome document is tabled.

The implementation of the recommendations contained in the outcome document would give rise to additional resource requirements in the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 and in the forthcoming biennium 2014-2015. However, in the absence of more detailed modalities of its implementation, it is not possible for the Secretariat to determine at this stage the full extent of the programme budget implications arising from the draft resolution. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would submit a detailed report on the programme budget implications to the General Assembly for its consideration in the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

The President: I should like to remind members that the report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development will be considered by the Second Committee at its sixty-seventh session in the fall.

The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/66/L.56, entitled "The future we want". May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/66/L.56 was adopted (resolution 66/288).

The President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Daniel (Nauru): Nauru has the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a group of 43 members that are most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and whose particular needs and vulnerabilities were first acknowledged at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Government of Brazil and the people of Rio de Janeiro for being the gracious hosts of these historic events. I would also like to convey our thanks to the Bureau of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and in particular to acknowledge its co-Chairs, Mr. John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, and Mr. Kim Sook of the Republic of Korea.

"The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex) embodies commitments that will advance our common aspirations to achieve sustainable development. Today, I would like to highlight a few that are particularly relevant to small island developing States (SIDS).

At Rio, leaders called for continued and enhanced efforts to assist SIDS in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action. These are the essential blueprints for addressing the sustainable development needs of SIDS. Recent assessments show that we are falling short in our commitments under those outcome documents. As long as such gaps remain, SIDS will be unable to achieve the sustainable development for which we all strive.

The time has also come for us to turn our attention to the next SIDS conference. In the same way that Rio+20 allowed us, as an international community, to take stock, the twentieth anniversary of the original Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will give SIDS a timely opportunity to take stock of how far we have come and how much further we still have to go. We thank the international community for its support, and look forward to working together during the next session of the General Assembly in order to put in place the structure necessary to ensure a successful meeting.

As members of the Assembly are aware, climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. For AOSIS members, sea-level rise and other adverse effects of climate change pose a significant threat to our efforts to achieve sustainable development. For some members, they represent the gravest threat to survival and viability, including through loss of territory. We are gratified to see the seriousness of that issue reflected in the outcome document, and we look forward to seeing real action to convert the concern expressed in the Rio outcome to changes that will ensure the continued existence of AOSIS members.

There can be no doubt that one of the most important agreements to come out of Rio is the decision to undertake work on sustainable development goals. Developing such action-oriented goals, which will be global in nature and universally applicable while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development, and while respecting

national policies and priorities, is a task worthy of our attention. If these goals are to reflect the rich diversity of our global community, we believe it is essential that there be adequate representation of SIDS within the working group. Given the importance to SIDS of the post-2015 framework, we would also suggest that the Secretary-General contemplate inviting representatives from the SIDS to be part of his high-level panel on post-2015 development planning.

We now begin the real work of Rio+20, ensuring implementation of our commitments so that our peoples will see benefits on the ground. AOSIS looks forward to working cooperatively with others to ensure the future we want.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States (SIDS) represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Papua New Guinea.

We joined the consensus in the adoption today of resolution 66/288, and collectively we also support the statement delivered on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States by the representative of Nauru.

Our appreciation goes to the many different players that worked very hard to make the process of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) a success: first to the co-Chairs, the Ambassadors of Antigua and Barbuda and the Republic of Korea; to the United Nations Secretariat, under the able leadership of Mr. Sha Zukang; and certainly to the Brazilian presidency and the people of Rio de Janeiro for hosting us during the Conference. And, not least, I would like to pay special tribute on behalf of the Pacific SIDS to our Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his tireless efforts.

The Pacific SIDS regard the outcome of Rio+20 as a success in the cause of advancing sustainable development. The document we have just adopted (resolution 66/288, annex) is very comprehensive, and so in the interests of time I will focus only on two aspects.

First, on oceans, the Pacific SIDS regard the Rio+20 outcome as a crucial step towards the preservation and sustainable use of oceans. Our outcome document is forward-looking and at the same time practical. The world has recognized the importance that oceans play in the everyday lives of all people. Many important issues are covered in the section on oceans. We have achieved a step forward on sustainable fisheries, the protection of coral reefs and ocean acidification, ocean fertilization, marine pollution, the introduction of alien marine species, the transfer of technology, sea-level rise and coastal erosion, subsidies and reform of regional fisheries management organization. Most important, we are giving countries the tools to help themselves in identifying and developing their strategies in order to derive the biggest benefit from their ocean resources. The Pacific SIDS see the outcome as a solid basis for defining sustainable development goals, particularly on oceans. Indeed, we look forward to the work of the sustainable development goal committee, and we note the comments just made by the representative of Nauru in that regard.

My second point is on the sustainable development of small island developing States. The outcome of Rio+20 is encouraging yet sobering. It highlights the threat of lost territory for SIDS, and for some of us that means the loss of our territory and the disappearance of States. The document states correctly that it represents "the gravest of threats to their survival and viability" (*resolution 66/288, annex, para. 178*). At the same time, Rio+20 is looking for a practical way forward. In particular, the third global conference on small island developing States in 2014 will provide us with answers on our unique and particular vulnerabilities. However, it will also provide us with an opportunity to showcase our achievements, where we lead the world on sustainable development and of which we are rightly proud. The Pacific is proud to offer to host the Conference.

There are also some grey areas where the outcome document is unclear. For example, we do not know what will happen to the review of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, which were undertaken on a biennial basis at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. We are looking forward to discussing the subject at the high-level political forum.

Lastly, Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to you for your tireless efforts in this regard.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to adopt

the outcome document, entitled "The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex) of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June. We would also like to congratulate Brazil on its excellent work in hosting that event.

The future we want is not very well mapped out in this document, and it is missing a lot of what is needed in order to ensure that humankind does not perish. Since life is better than death, humankind will not let it vanish without a struggle. Our planet and nature can survive without us, but we cannot survive without them. The worst-case scenario is that human life could disappear; unfortunately, this is not a mere scenario. All the available scientific data and relevant documents of the United Nations tell a tale of the progressive deterioration of ecosystems and the quality of life of species. In the document we have adopted today, the Earth is seen as a repository of resources, and humans are not sufficiently appreciated for their qualities as integral inhabitants of Mother Earth.

The speculative economy is the distinguishing characteristic of the capitalism preying on the human species and nature today. Those mainly responsible for the climate change that is affecting the world and every country in it have succeeded in ensuring that the Kyoto Protocol is powerless to deal with the effects of climate change. Sustainable development is missing at least three dimensions: ethics, culture and ecology. In that regard, Venezuela will continue to fight for the Kyoto Protocol and its validity and against the perverse policies of financial capitalism that are destroying humankind and the planet. We must ensure that nature is not seen as a commodity for the benefit of the few.

Regarding the adoption of resolution 66/288, entitled "The future we want", the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to express its reservations concerning paragraphs 125, 126, 127, 129, 162 and 225, as well as to make a clarification concerning paragraph 162. We take this opportunity to express our concern about statements issued by certain bodies of the United Nations that are attempting to implement in piecemeal fashion some sections of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, in particular the section relating to the so-called green economy. They attempt to ignore the fact that Heads of State and Government have affirmed that every country uses different approaches, models, visions and instruments that depend on their individual national circumstances in its efforts to achieve sustainable development.

The green economy is not the only available model to that end, and our policies should be governed by all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Thus, all United Nations entities, including those of the Secretariat, should follow those parameters for sustainable development in order to ensure achievement of internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

In conclusion, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela requests that its statement of reservations and the previous explanatory statements to which I have referred be included in the record of this plenary meeting of the General Assembly, and that they form an integral part of the document adopted today. To that end, my delegation will provide the Secretariat with a corresponding document.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes the adoption today of resolution 66/288. The outcome document (resolution 66/288, annex) of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) was the product of weeks of work by States, major groups and the Secretariat, both here and in Rio de Janeiro, and we pay tribute to all that effort. We would like to express particular appreciation to the Preparatory Committee co-Chairs, Ambassadors Kim Sook of the Republic of Korea and Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, for their work; and, of course, to Brazil, which brought together the final text in a form that we could all accept in Rio. That was no easy task.

Achieving consensus on such a complex document, even before the high-level meeting, was positive not only for the Conference but also demonstrated that multilateral processes can and do work. New Zealand was pleased that many of its priority areas were reflected in the final text. The paragraphs on oceans and fisheries represent real progress, and we hope the proposed sustainable development goals will include one on oceans, reflecting their critical role in the health of our planet. We welcome the decision to hold a third international conference on small island developing States in 2014, hopefully, as has already been suggested in the statement made on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States, in our own Pacific region. We were also pleased with the reference to fossil fuel subsidy reform, even though it is not as strong as we had

originally proposed. We see that reform as important to free up the resources needed for financing sustainable development.

There were, of course, some aspects about which we were less happy, including the lack of a reference to agricultural subsidy reform and to reproductive rights. But let me be clear. Overall, New Zealand regards Rio+20 as a success, and we will say that as often and as loudly as might be necessary.

The outcome document is naturally not the end. It is very much a work programme for the next few years as it establishes ambitious processes and timetables, not least on institutional reform. In seizing the opportunities presented by the Rio Conference, we must keep at the forefront the certain knowledge that, in this twenty-first century, the only viable development is sustainable development that integrates all three dimensions: economic, social and environmental.

Rio+20 was also a landmark for private-sector involvement. Indeed, it was one of the most participatory conferences in history, assisted by new technologies. That particularly helped engage young people, whose future we were discussing. Sustainable development is not just a matter for States. The private sector, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders can make important contributions and must all be part of the processes going forward. Overall, the road from Rio will be as challenging as the road to Rio. New Zealand will willingly play its part in the work that lies ahead.

Finally, we must express sadness that it was not possible for two very small Pacific countries — the Cook Islands and Niue — to attend the critically important sustainable development conference, as they did in Rio in 1992 and in Johannesburg in 2002. I will not rehearse again the reasons for that. Suffice it to say, the whole Pacific family, of which they are an integral part, regrets their exclusion and hopes that it will never happen again. After all, when it comes to sustainable development, *he waka eke noa* — we are all in this canoe together.

Mr. Husain (Canada): Canada was pleased to join the consensus on resolution 66/288, endorsing the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude to the Government and people of Brazil for hosting such a successful conference. We would also like to reaffirm Canada's commitment to actively contribute to the important work that was launched in Rio, including the drawing up of sustainable development goals that would be a key aspect of the post-2015 development framework.

(*spoke in French*)

Following the resolution's adoption, we would like to underscore that Canada provided an explanatory note on the outcome document of Rio+20 (resolution 66/288, annex), in which we stated our positions on the right to drinking water and basic sanitation. That note was submitted to the Secretariat of the United Nations in order for it to be distributed as an official document of the Conference.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Government of Brazil for its excellent hosting of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and for its decisive role in the summit's success. Furthermore, my thanks and congratulations also go to the two co-Chairs of the process, Ambassadors John Ashe and Kim Sook.

Switzerland welcomes the adoption of the outcome document of Rio+20, entitled "The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex), in which we, the community of States, reiterated our commitment to sustainable development. Nevertheless, the success of the Rio+20 Conference will be measured not just by the outcome document, but, above all, by the actions that we undertake based on that declaration.

In Rio, we started several processes that have the capacity to lead to significant progress. Switzerland is ready to commit to those processes and looks forward to working with all members in order to ensure an effective follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference. Switzerland particularly welcomes the commitment made in Rio to further the sustainable development goals. It is important that those goals take into equal account the three aspects of sustainable development and that the development of such goals be coordinated beyond the 2015 process. We attach great importance to the smooth functioning of the working group on sustainable development goals and we welcome its establishment.

Switzerland welcomes the fact that Rio+20 introduced the concept of the green economy into the global agenda. The outcome document is a good basis

for action and a starting point to accelerate the change towards a green economy. Switzerland is convinced that the green economy helps industrialized countries as much as developing countries as an important instrument for achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Ms. Patmore (Australia): Australia would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Brazil for its leadership as host and President of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), as well as the co-Chairs of the Conference, Ambassador John Ashe and Ambassador Kim Sook and its Secretary-General, Mr. Sha Zukang, for their commendable drive and commitment towards achieving the outcome document (resolution 66/288, annex)

Australia welcomes the Rio+20 outcome document and fully supports its endorsement. We believe that the document sets a coherent forward agenda for sustainable development, and we look forward to working with all stakeholders to implement the future we want.

Australia welcomes the agreement to establish a set of universal sustainable development goals. We look forward to working with other Governments and stakeholders on the process to develop those goals in the coming year, particularly to ensure that they are integrated in the post-2015 development agenda. Supporting countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remains a high priority for Australia. We are glad that that commitment will be further developed through the Secretary-General's MDG Advocacy Group, of which Australia's Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, is pleased to have been appointed co-Chair.

Australia particularly welcomes the priority given at Rio+20 to the conservation and sustainable management of our oceans and seas. Australia worked constructively with a range of States, including the small island developing States and coastal States, to achieve outcomes that encourage the elimination of harmful fishery subsidies and the reduction of marine debris and that recognize the significance of ocean acidification and the need for enhanced action on biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. In that regard, Australia welcomes the decision to hold the third international conference on small island developing States in 2014, which will be critical to advancing the sustainable development agenda for those States.

Strengthening the international commitment to gender equality is a high priority for Australia. We are pleased that the importance of gender equality and women's economic empowerment to sustainable development featured so prominently across the text. We also welcome the agreement at Rio+20 to strengthen the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Environment Programme and to establish a high-level political forum for sustainable development.

As our Prime Minister Julia Gillard said at Rio+20, the next step towards achieving sustainable development must be turning those words into action. Australia was pleased to announce some $180 million in new funding towards that end. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to implement the Rio+20 outcomes, which will lay the foundations for achieving a sustainable future for all.

Mr. Archondo (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, the Plurinational State of Bolivia would like to express its recognition and thanks to the Government and people of the Federative Republic of Brazil for having hosted the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June, and for their outstanding work during the Conference.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia joined the consensus on resolution 66/288, entitled "The future we want", in the context of the adoption of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which we have just adopted. In that regard, the Bolivian delegation reiterates its position expressed on 22 June in Rio de Janeiro, which is reflected in document A/CONF.216/8, in which we express our reservations with regard to certain sections of the outcome document of the Conference. We hope that our position will be duly reflected in the record of this plenary meeting.

With regard to our reservations, Bolivia raised at the Conference and reiterates now the following points on the green economy. The Plurinational State of Bolivia rejects the consideration of the green economy as a new model and tool for the privatization of nature and society with the ostensible goal of achieving sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. Bolivia therefore reserves its position with regard to all references to the green economy and any interpretation arising from it that could be understood as a commodification of the functions and cycles of

nature, payment for environmental services, ways of avoiding commitments undertaken by developed countries towards developing countries, obligations for developing countries, and conditionalities on technical, technological and financial cooperation with reimbursable and non-reimbursable resources, including those allocated by international financial institutions for the sustainable development of developing countries. Bolivia assumes and reaffirms, as expressed in paragraph 56 of the Rio outcome document, that

> "there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development" (*resolution 66/288, annex, para. 56*),

and that countries have the sovereign right to choose their own sustainable development approaches, visions, models and tools.

Bolivia, as a sovereign State, has opted for the vision of good living through comprehensive development in harmony and balance with Mother Earth in order to build a fair and just society with solidarity, respecting the rights of original indigenous rural people and the Bolivian people as a whole.

Bearing in mind the principles of international law such as the equality of rights, the self-determination of peoples, the equal sovereignty of all States, non-interference in the domestic matters of States, the right to development in the context of the exercise of competencies provided for by international law, Bolivia understands that the means of implementation and flexibility in the context of sustainable development are critical. Therefore, no conditions should be applied to various visions, approaches, models and tools adopted by Governments to achieve sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. At the same time, Bolivia understands that the agencies and programmes of the United Nations will implement this resolution respecting the agreement of Member States and without introducing elements that were not agreed upon at the Conference in Rio.

However, Bolivia also reserves its position with regard to paragraph 225 of the outcome document on the rationalization of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, because it implies a restructuring of our tax and regulatory system, and is contrary to the political Constitution of the Plurinational State of Bolivia because it affects decisions that are of a purely sovereign nature.

Furthermore, we affirm that the implementation of that paragraph could involve an imposition, external interference, a potentially binding commitment and external conditionality for international cooperation, which going forward should not be linked to the so-called sustainable development goals. Similarly, we will accept no kind of assessment, monitoring, reporting or revision of our national energy measures and policies that would affect our national sovereignty.

Bolivia also reserves its position with regard to the notion of innovative forms of financing, included in paragraphs 253 and 267, among others, of the Rio outcome document, which could include or be interpreted as being sources from coal markets, water and water rights markets, payment for environmental services and schemes to commodify natural functions and cycles.

Secondly, Bolivia noted at the Conference and notes again here its own interpretations of the document itself. Bolivia interprets, for example, the term "food security", contained in the section entitled "Food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture", as being the achievement of food sovereignty in the context of the process of learning to feed oneself in order to live well. We derive this interpretation from the definition of the World Forum on Food Sovereignty, held in Havana, Cuba in 2001, namely,

> "peoples' right to define their own policies and strategies for the sustainable production, distribution and consumption of food that guarantee the right to food for the entire population, on the basis of small and medium-sized production, respecting their own cultures and the diversity of peasant, fishing and indigenous forms of agricultural production, marketing and management of rural areas, in which women play a fundamental role".

With regard to paragraph 272 of the outcome document, Bolivia interprets the phrase "strengthened ... scientific and technological capacities" to include not only academic and institutional knowledge, but also as the forms of science, traditional technology, local know-how and ancestral knowledge of original indigenous rural populations and the Bolivian people in the context of cultural exchange and a dialogue of knowledge.

On this occasion, I recall that on the historic date of 28 July 2010, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/292, entitled "The human right to water

and sanitation", which recognizes that "the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights". Although the commitments relating to the human right to drinking water and sanitation are reaffirmed in paragraph 121 of the outcome document, Bolivia also understands that the right to drinking water and sanitation is an essential human right for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights. In that respect, Bolivia will take up that point once again at the next session of the General Assembly, basing ourselves on the resolution approved at this session. Similarly, two years after the adoption of resolution 64/292, we welcome the fact that commemorations to recognize this process are being held by peoples and civil society, including our proposed day to highlight the human right to water and sanitation.

Mr. Souissi (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Morocco warmly thanks the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Ambassadors of South Korea and Antigua and Barbuda for their tireless efforts over the course of the negotiations on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

Morocco welcomes the outcome of Rio+20, which was a first step in building an irreversible process of sustainable development. Rio+20 has laid the groundwork for building the sustainable development goals and a financial strategy that should take shape through the two working groups. Morocco hopes that Rio+20 will be followed up with concrete efforts. The historic consensus adopted in Rio demonstrates the international community's willingness and commitment to making the green economy and sustainable development a reality, particularly through the 2015 process.

Morocco again thanks the President for his untiring efforts.

Mr. Kim Sook (Republic of Korea): I warmly welcome the decision of the General Assembly to formally endorse the outcome document (resolution 66/288, annex) of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Brazil once more for its leadership and warm hospitality. I also thank you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General for your strong leadership and initiative.

I join previous speakers in proclaiming the success of Rio+20. In the document entitled "The future we want", we have reaffirmed our strong commitment to sustainable development and laid a firm foundation for a sustainable future for all. However, the success of Rio+20 will not be complete until follow-up actions are taken. We must live up to the promises in our commitments and implement them in order to make Rio+20 a lasting legacy.

To that end, the General Assembly's role is crucial. We have a lot of work before us, including developing sustainable development goals and strengthening the institutional framework for such development. In the process, we should not forget the wisdom, good faith and spirit of compromise and flexibility that we shared during the long and tough negotiations on the outcome document. The Republic of Korea is fully committed to playing its part in the efforts towards sustainable development, and looks forward to working with Member States to implement the Rio+20 commitments.

Mrs. Ribeiro Viotti (Brazil): Brazil is proud to have hosted and presided over the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). I would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to the Secretariat as a whole, to the co-Chairs of the preparatory process, Ambassadors John Ashe and Kim Sook, and to all Member States and participants for what we accomplished together.

The outcome document we have just endorsed, "The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex), is an important landmark in our journey towards sustainable development, which began in Rio in 1992. Together we have taken a significant step towards a more just, equitable and prosperous future. As President Dilma Rousseff stated at the closing session, Brazil is convinced that consensus decisions achieved through multilateralism are the best foundations for progress in our collective endeavours to achieve sustainable development.

The outcome document reflects progress in many important areas, and also paves the way for our future work. We have brought poverty eradication to the centre of the debate on the future we want. We have launched the sustainable development goals to give focus and direction to our collective efforts. The high-level political forum we have established will coordinate the work we do to advance sustainable development and implement the sustainable development goals. The United Nations Environment Programme was strengthened and will be

better able to help developing countries implement their policies. Other important elements include the adoption of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, the decision to launch a programme of work on broader measuring standards designed to complement that of gross domestic product so as to better inform policy decisions, and agreement on further steps regarding the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Rio+20 was also a landmark for civil society participation. Tens of thousands took part in the People's Summit. The dialogues on sustainable development were an innovative way of engaging various segments of society in the debate. More than a million people took part in the online polls that chose recommendations to be presented to the Heads of State and Government during the Conference. The major cities forum, the women's forum and the more than 1,000 side events showed the intense mobilization of stakeholders and captured their contributions. The registry of commitments gave concrete expression to the strong engagement of Governments, the private sector, civil society and other groups. Rio+20 helped raise awareness of the crucial importance of sustainable development among young people. That is why we believe that it will have lasting impact. Future generations will have a basis from which to push forward the construction of the sustainable world we we envisaged in Rio.

The outcome document we have just endorsed contains several mandates for the development of our work, based on the decisions we took in Rio. Among those are the formation of an open working group for developing global sustainable development goals to be considered by the General Assembly; the establishment of an intergovernmental process, under the General Assembly, to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy; and considering a set of recommendations from the Secretary-General for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies.

I thank you, Mr. President, for the confidence you have placed in me by inviting me to facilitate the process of setting up the open working group on sustainable development goals. I trust we will be able to complete the task within the stipulated time. Considerable work lies ahead of us. Brazil will be actively engaged in it.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Beviglia Zampetti (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The Europ ean Union and its member States strongly welcome the endorsement by the General Assembly of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), entitled "The future we want" (resolution 66/288, annex). We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Brazil for having hosted the Conference and provided all the necessary leadership and support.

As was stated at the highest level in Rio, we consider the renewed political commitment to moving towards sustainable development to be a key outcome of the Conference. We are particularly pleased that we collectively managed to address the challenge of sustainable development governance. We welcome the renewal of the institutional framework for sustainable development and the creation of the high-level forum. As regards environmental governance, we are pleased with the decision to upgrade the United Nations Environment Programme. We consider the enhanced role given to civil society and local authorities in new governance frameworks to be a significant development. The European Union and its member States will contribute actively to translating those commitments into reality.

We also welcome the recognition in Rio that an inclusive green economy is a useful tool and a promising pathway to achieving sustainable development. We remain of the view that, after decades of creating wealth through more conventional economic models, the international community has not decisively addressed resource depletion, environmental degradation, economic inequalities or social marginalization. We believe that an inclusive green economy should address the economic, social and environmental dimensions, thereby significantly contributing to achieving poverty eradication, fair and decent jobs, food security and ecosystem resilience.

Both before and in Rio+20, the European Union and its member States engaged constructively while seeking an ambitious result. We would have liked to see more, but the Rio outcome document offers a number of opportunities for undertaking further substantive work at the international level. In this connection, the European Union and its member States underline the importance of operationalizing and further developing what was agreed in Rio within the United Nations system.

Our commitment to engaging actively and constructively with partners in the forthcoming negotiations and processes established in Rio remains undiminished. Our ambition also remains undimmed. Our collective commitment to eradicating poverty and to improving people's lives while significantly reducing pressures on the environment demands nothing less.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): Japan welcomes the adoption of resolution 66/288 and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) annexed to it. We would also like to once again express our heartfelt appreciation to the Government of the host country, Brazil, and to the two co-Chairs and the Bureau of the preparatory process for their leadership.

At Rio+20, we, the Member States, were given the opportunity to deepen our understanding of the transition to a green economy, and the international community was able to send a positive message on moving forward towards a green economy. Member States noted the importance of ongoing efforts to recognize and promote the notion of human security. We also emphasized the importance of taking a people-centred approach in efforts to achieve sustainable development. Japan regards these as significant elements of the outcome document.

We were able to reach an agreement on the establishment of an intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals, which we agreed should be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. Japan believes that, after 2015, the international community should strive as one to achieve a single set of international development goals that are simple, clear, measurable and easy to understand.

With regard to the institutional framework, we also agreed on the establishment of a high-level political forum and the strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Regarding UNEP, Japan will explain our position on the issue of increasing financial resources from the regular budget during the upcoming follow-up negotiations.

In his statement at Rio+20, the Foreign Minister of Japan, Mr. Koichiro Gemba, announced Japan's green future initiatives, composed of the following three initiatives for sustainable development: first, promoting the future cities we want worldwide; secondly, contributing to the global transition to a green economy; and thirdly, building resilient societies. Japan will steadily implement these initiatives on the basis of human security.

Finally, allow me to assure the Assembly that Japan is fully committed to contributing positively to the Rio+20 follow-up process.

Ms. Kim (United States of America): The United States wishes again to congratulate the Government and people of Brazil on their leadership in making the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development a success. We would like to acknowledge the essential contribution of our co-chairs, Ambassadors Ashe and Kim Sook, all the representatives who stepped in to facilitate key parts of the text, and all our colleagues for the collective hard work needed to achieve the outcome.

As Secretary Clinton said at the Conference, the outcome document (resolution 66/288, annex) marks a real advance for sustainable development. In connection with the outcome document, we would like to reiterate that the United States has additional observations and clarifications on several elements of the outcome document. We have submitted these in writing for inclusion in the official record of the Conference.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 19.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.